DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 735 CE 064 963

AUTHOR Koloski, Judith Ann
TITLE Effective Service Delivery in Adult Literacy Programs: A Policy Review and Recommendations.
INSTITUTION National Center on Adult Literacy, Philadelphia, PA.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO NCAL-TR-93-14
PUB DATE Nov 93
CONTRACT R117Q0003
NOTE 41p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Center on Adult Literacy, Dissemination/Publications, University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111 ($5; checks payable to Kinko's Copy Center).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; *Adult Programs; *Agency Cooperation; Cooperative Programs; *Coordination; Educational Cooperation; Educational Policy; *Federal Legislation; *State Programs
IDENTIFIERS Adult Education Act; Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Program; Job Training Partnership Act 1982

ABSTRACT

This report reviews legislative and administrative policies surrounding adult basic education, the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills program (JOBS) of the Family Support Act, and the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA). Recommendations are made for the development of an effective continuum of literacy services. Section A is a historical summary of federal literacy policy that culminated in the Adult Education Act (AEA). Section B reviews the major pieces of federal legislation--AEA, JTPA, JOBS, and others--that could have a significant impact on adult literacy services. Section C presents results of telephone surveys with directors in Massachusetts, New York, and Kentucky to determine the status of collaboration and coordinated service delivery. These state summaries describe the purpose of state coordination, the agencies and programs involved, specific collaborative activities, and challenges to coordination. Section D presents results of interviews with local administrators in the same three states who were asked whether the state efforts to coordinate programs enabled them to provide better services to clients and what issues surrounding coordination they felt needed to be addressed. The final section examines seven areas of difference among AEA, JOBS, and JTPA programs in relation to recommendations that are offered to foster coordination: purpose/foci, funding, client eligibility, services provided, administrative structures, delivery systems, and data collection. Contains 16 references. (YLB)

ED 363 735

EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS:

A POLICY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Judith Ann Koloski

Judy Koloski and Associates

NCAL TECHNICAL REPORT TR93-14
NOVEMBER 1993

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

NATIONAL CENTER ON ADULT LITERACY
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
3910 CHESTNUT STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19104-3111
TEL: (215) 898-2100 FAX: (215) 898-9804

CE 064 562

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS:

A POLICY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Judith Ann Koloski

Judy Koloski and Associates

NCAL TECHNICAL REPORT TR93-14
NOVEMBER 1993

This work was supported by funding from the National Center on Adult Literacy at the University of Pennsylvania, which is part of the Education Research and Development Center Program (Grant No. R117Q0003) as administered by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, in cooperation with the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services. The findings and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the National Center on Adult Literacy, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, or the U.S. Department of Education.

PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 1993 BY
NATIONAL CENTER ON ADULT LITERACY
University of Pennsylvania
3910 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111
Phone (215) 898-2100 FAX (215) 898-9804

The National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL) was established in 1990 by the U.S. Department of Education, with co-funding from the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services. The mission of NCAL addresses three primary challenges: (a) to enhance the knowledge base about adult literacy; (b) to improve the quality of research and development in the field; and (c) to ensure a strong, two-way relationship between research and practice. Through applied research and development and dissemination of the results to researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, NCAL seeks to improve the quality of adult literacy programs and services on a nationwide basis. NCAL serves as a major operating unit of the Literacy Research Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

NCAL publications to date include:

May 1992 *Matching Literacy Testing With Social Policy: What are the Alternatives?*
Richard L. Venezky *(PB92-1, 8 pages)*

Oct 1992 *Life-Span and Life-Space Literacy: Research and Policy in National and International Perspectives*
Daniel A. Wagner *(OP92-1, 24 pages)*

Oct 1992 *Expanding Theories of Adult Literacy Participation*
Karen Reed Wikelund, Stephen Reder, Sylvia Hart-Landsberg *(TR92-1, 40 pages)*

Oct 1992 *Invitations to Inquiry: Rethinking Staff Development in Adult Literacy Education*
Susan L. Lytle, Alisa Belzer, Rebecca Reumann *(TR92-2, 44 pages)*

Dec 1992 *Developing the Professional Workforce for Adult Literacy Education*
Susan L. Lytle, Alisa Belzer, Rebecca Reumann *(PB92-2, 11 pages)*

Jan 1993 *The Impact of BIB-Spiralling Induced Missing Data Patterns on Goodness-of-Fit Tests in Factor Analysis*
David Kaplan *(OP93-1, 18 pages)*

Mar 1993 *The Impact of Workplace Literacy Programs: A New Model for Evaluation of Workplace Literacy Programs*
Larry Mikulecky, Paul Lloyd *(TR93-2, 180 pages)*

Mar 1993 *Literacy and Machines: An Overview of the Use of Technology in Adult Literacy Programs*
Terilyn C. Turner *(TR93-3, 86 pages)*

Jun 1993 *Literacy and Development: Rationales, Assessment, and Innovation*
Daniel A. Wagner *(IP93-1, 50 pages)*

Jun 1993 *Myths and Misconceptions in Adult Literacy: A Research and Development Perspective*
Daniel A. Wagner *(PB93-1, 10 pages)*

Jun 1993 *Early Childhood, Family, and Health Issues in Literacy: International Perspectives*
Laurel D. Puchner *(IP93-2, 45 pages)*

Sep 1993 *Prison Literacy: Implications for Program and Assessment Policy*
Anabel Newman, Warren Lewis, Carolyn Beverstock *(TR93-1, 219 pages)*

Sep 1993 *Management Information Systems in Adult Education: Perspectives from the States and from Local Programs*
Mark A. Kutner, Lenore Webb, Rebecca Herman, Pelavin Associates, Inc. *(TR93-4, 150 pages)*

Sep 1993 *What Can Employers Assume about the Literacy Skills of GED Graduates?*
David Kaplan, Richard L. Venezky *(TR93-5, 45 pages)*

NCAL publications to date (continued)

Sep 1993 *Should Reading-Disabled Adults Be Distinguished From Other Adults Seeking Literacy Instruction? A Review of Theory and Research*
Anne E. Fowler, Hollis S. Scarborough *(TR93-7, 101 pages)*

Sep 1993 *When Less Is More: A Comparative Analysis of Methods for Placing Students in Adult Literacy Classes*
Richard Venezky, Page S. Bristow, John Sabatini *(TR93-8, 46 pages)*

Sep 1993 *Metacognitive Aspects of Adult Literacy*
Scott G. Paris, Andrea Parecki *(TR93-9, 44 pages)*

Sep 1993 *What Makes Worker Learn? The Role of Incentives in Workplace Education and Training*
Donald Hirsch, Daniel A. Wagner, ed. *(IP93-3, 243 pages)*

Nov 1993 *Teamwork and Literacy: Learning from a Skills-Poor Position*
Sylvia Hart-Landsberg, Steve Reder *(TR93-6, 63 pages)*

Nov 1993 *Motivations for Learning: Voices of Women Welfare Reform Participants*
Karen Wikelund *(TR93-10, 54 pages)*

Nov 1993 *Initiating Practitioner Inquiry: Adult Literacy Teachers, Tutors, and Administrators Research Their Practice*
Susan L. Lytle, Alisa Belzer, Rebecca Reumann *(TR93-11, 69 pages)*

Nov 1993 *Coalition Building for Adult Literacy: Personal and Organizational Perspectives*
Anabel P. Newman, Bernadette Lehman *(TR93-13, 68 pages)*

Nov 1993 *Effective Service Delivery in Adult Literacy Programs: A Policy Review and Recommendations*
Judith Ann Koloski *(TR93-14, 46 pages)*

Information on ordering of NCAL publications may be addressed to Dissemination at NCAL.

Revised November 1993

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract iii

Introduction 1
A. History of Federal Literacy Policy 3
B. Current Federal Literacy Programs 5
1. Adult Education Act (AEA) 5
2. Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) 7
3. Job Opportunity for Basic Skills (JOBS) 9
4. Other Program Initiatives 10
a. Immigrant Refugee and Control Act 10
b. Even Start 11
c. Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act 11
d. Library Services and Construction Act 11
e. Other 11
C. State Coordination of Adult Literacy Programs 13
1. Massachusetts 13
a. Agencies/Programs Involved 14
b. Specific Collaborative Activities 14
c. Challenges to Coordination 15
2. New York 16
a. Agencies/Programs Involved 16
b. Specific Collaborative Activities 16
c. Challenges to Coordination 17
3. Kentucky 18
a. Agencies/Programs Involved 18
b. Specific Collaborative Activities 18
c. Challenges to Coordination 19
D. What Coordination Means at the Local Level 21
1. Massachusetts 21
2. New York 22
3. Kentucky 22
E. Recommendations 25
1. Purpose/Foci 25
2. Funding 26
3. Client Eligibility 28
4. Services Provided 29
5. Administrative Structures 30
6. Delivery Systems 31
7. Data Collection 31
F. Summary 33

Endnotes 35
References 37

EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMMING:

A POLICY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Judith Ann Koloski
Judy Koloski & Associates

Abstract

The lack of adequate literacy skills in the adult population became a popular concern in the 1980s as public attention focused on "A Nation at Risk," declining productivity in U.S. industry, and the trend toward higher technology in the workplace. Prior to the mid-1980s, the federally funded adult basic education program had been the primary service delivery system for basic literacy skills. New legislation mandated coordination between adult basic education and the JOBS program of the Family Support Act and the Job Training and Partnership Act. A significant influx of new federal dollars was made available to meet the educational needs of clients served by these programs. However, systemic problems in the legislative and administrative policies surrounding these programs have prevented public policy from achieving its intended goal of fostering a more coordinated, effective, and enhanced delivery system. This report reviews those policies and makes recommendations for the development of an effective continuum of literacy services.

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has been characterized by significant attention to and dialogue on issues surrounding adult illiteracy in the United States. Prior to this period, the Adult Education Act of 1966 had been the primary public policy effort to deal with illiteracy, but it was not well recognized and was grossly underfunded.

In 1981, Barbara Bush, wife of the then Vice President, began a promotional effort to focus public attention on the issue, and in 1983, the literacy initiative was inaugurated by the U.S. Department of Education. Discussions in the public sector took on more significance as the private sector raised concerns about productivity. Organizations such as the Business Council for Effective Literacy, founded in 1983, were established to inform the private sector and to assist it in understanding the contribution of illiteracy to the economic downturn. In 1985, commercial television (ABC) and public broadcasting (WQED, Pittsburgh) joined in a major awareness campaign—Project Literacy US—to direct public attention to the problems of adult illiteracy.

The literacy dialogue was further expanded by significant numbers of immigrants and refugees entering the United States during the 1980s, many of whom were illiterate in their native languages. In 1988, the critical role of the family in literacy acquisition was acknowledged by the establishment of the National Center for Family Literacy at Louisville, Kentucky. In 1990, the National Center on Adult Literacy at the University of Pennsylvania was created in order to provide national leadership for research and development in adult literacy.

This attention to literacy has resulted in the development of new and redirected public policy agendas having a myriad of purposes but all incorporating the belief that literacy is an important underpinning for many successful programs. Significantly increased public funds may now be available to support literacy efforts under a variety of legislative initiatives, and there is a presumption that the mandates for coordination and cooperation have engendered a more holistic approach to solving the nation's literacy problem.

A. History of Federal Literacy Policy

The literacy of the country's citizens has always been of at least cursory interest to the federal government. As early as 1840, the government attempted to collect census data on literacy skills by asking how many white adults in a household could not read or write (Costa, 1988). As immigration increased in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the need for citizenship education and English language instruction was reflected in provisions for adult education programming under the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1918. The 1917 Smith-Hughes Act, which was designed to provide adult vocational training, recognized that many adults needed basic literacy skills training before they could benefit from vocational training. During and after both World Wars, significant testing of military personnel provided an indication of the need for basic literacy skills training in the adult population. The military remains one of the largest providers of educational services to adults in the United States.

Large-scale involvement of the federal government in adult literacy really did not begin until the 1960s, when the civil rights movement and Great Society legislation focused attention on the need for enhanced educational opportunities for all adults. The first public policy initiative on the issue of adult illiteracy came within the framework of the Manpower Training and Development Act of 1963, which authorized job training for adults. An amendment incorporated provisions for basic literacy skills training for unemployed adults. This was the first legislative acknowledgment of the link between economic effort and literacy. This amendment also served as a precursor of the philosophical tenets guiding current policy development. In 1964, the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) was passed as part of the War on Poverty. While the impetus was job training and economic development, Title III of the EOA provided a small amount of funds ($18.6 million) for adult basic literacy skills programs to be administered through the states (Eyre, 1992).

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 initiated a major federal role in public school education. In 1966, the Adult Education Act (AEA) transferred responsibility for adult basic literacy skills programs from the Office of Economic Development to the U.S. Office of Education, in recognition of the integral role of the educational system in the provision of adult literacy services

(U.S. Department of Education, 1991). The AEA had two major components:

- *Literacy* was defined to include basic education, English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL), and citizenship education programs. It was further assumed that adults should have the opportunity to complete their education to at least a high school level.
- Funds were allocated to states by a formula based on the number of adults 16 years of age and over who did not possess a high school diploma. National census data were (and still are) used to determine educational needs in each state.

Approximately $19.9 million was appropriated to programs under the AEA in 1966, and in 1967, this figure increased by 30% to nearly $26.3 million.[1] The legislation fostered the need for each state to have a director of adult education, who was charged with the responsibility of administering AEA programs at the state level. States became concerned with the development of state plans, formulas for local project funding of adult basic education services, and evaluation procedures for the process (Eyre, 1992).

The AEA has become part of the educational bureaucracy, and the original legislation has been the foundation for all state activity in adult literacy education. Indeed, the AEA provided the impetus for states to acknowledge, promote, and support adult literacy education. State and local programs now contribute more than four times the federal dollars to support adult education and literacy services.[2]

B. Current Federal Literacy Programs

This section reviews the major pieces of federal legislation—Adult Education Act (AEA), Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Job Opportunity for Basic Skills (JOBS), and others—which potentially can have a significant impact on adult literacy services.

1. Adult Education Act (AEA)

Since its inception, the AEA has remained the basic legislative authorization for publicly supported adult literacy activities in the United States. The AEA is administered by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education. The focus in this report is on the sections of the AEA and its amendments that provide basic grants to states (U.S. Department of Education, 1992). The AEA has three major purposes (U.S. Department of Education, 1992):

- to assist states in improving educational opportunities for adults who lack the level of literacy skills requisite to effective citizenship and productive employment;
- to expand and improve the current adult education delivery system to educationally disadvantaged adults; and
- to focus on the establishment of adult education programs that enhance literacy skills, enable participants to benefit from job training and retraining, and support the completion of secondary school.

The U.S. Secretary of Education distributes funds to state education agencies. Each state receives a basic allotment of $250,000 ($100,000 for the territories) plus an additional amount based on the ratio of the total number of adults in the state to the number of adults 16 years of age and over who are not high school graduates or the equivalent and are not required to be in school. In fiscal year 1992, $235 million was available for the state grant program with a 75%/25% federal/state match; the fiscal year 1993 appropriation is $260 million.

State agencies charged with managing the AEA program must submit program and financial reports annually and major plans

every four years (the next is due in 1994). State plans must be reviewed by state boards for vocational education, state postsecondary education governing bodies, and Job Training and Coordinating Councils. States are also encouraged to coordinate AEA efforts with a variety of federal and state programs through such means as advisory councils composed of representatives of related programs such as JTPA, JOBS, vocational education, health services, vocational rehabilitation, libraries, volunteer organizations, and the business and labor communities.

AEA programs are available without charge to anyone who needs assistance in basic literacy skills development or high school completion. Participants may be employed or not, wealthy or economically disadvantaged, on public assistance or homeless. The program's focus is on educationally disadvantaged adults and includes services for institutionalized adults and Gateway grants for residents of public housing. In terms of outcomes, AEA programs must demonstrate the educational progress of the clients served, and in particular, they must demonstrate basic literacy skills improvements on some type of standardized assessment.

As mentioned earlier, the confluence of several major factors in the public perception of the importance of literacy services contributed to major policy initiatives in the 1980s. It was, however, the Hawkins-Stafford School Improvement Amendments of 1988 that made the first major changes in the AEA and in adult literacy education. Specifically, the amendments accomplished the following:

- States were required to redirect 10% of program funding to serve an institutionalized population.
- A cap was placed on state and local administrative cost levels.
- States were required to provide some data on programmatic outcomes.
- The requirement for program evaluation was formalized.
- A set of programs supporting basic literacy skills for Native Americans was established.

The 1988 amendments also acknowledged the importance of an educated work force and authorized a workplace literacy initiative for the first time through a $19 million program to upgrade the skills of workers on the job. In addition, the amendments included a program of English literacy grants which, among other things,

provided funds for community-based organizations to conduct ESL programs.

The National Literacy Act of 1991 further amended the AEA and supported major initiatives in literacy services. It also provided a new definition of literacy:

> *For purposes of this Act, the term literacy means an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, and to compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, and in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.*

The amendments to the AEA included the requirement that adult education programs develop indicators of program quality. These indicators are actually a follow-up to the 1988 amendments that asked states to pay more attention to evaluation of programs. The amendment also included the requirement that state funding agencies provide "direct and equitable access" to all potential providers of literacy services in a state (U.S. Office of Education, 1992).

The National Literacy Act established the following major new initiatives to enhance literacy services: (a) the National Institute for Literacy to serve as a central clearinghouse for research, technical assistance, training, and public information in the burgeoning field; (b) state resource centers to provide training and technical assistance for state programs; and (c) a focus on staff development, technology, and literacy services for incarcerated individuals.

Unfortunately, as is often the case, appropriations for the legislated activities have been significantly less than anticipated. To cite two examples: The National Institute for Literacy was to have been funded at a level of $15 million, but total funding thus far has been only $5 million; and state resource centers were to receive $25 million, but in fiscal year 1993, only $7 million was authorized.

2. Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)

The JTPA program has also been re-examined in the last decade. A 1990 report prepared for Congress expressed concern that because of its employment outcomes, the JTPA program was skimming the most likely job candidates for service and not meeting the needs of the significantly larger population for whom it was intended—the most economically disadvantaged and the hard-core unemployed (Grubb, Brown, Kaufman, & Lederer, 1991,

p. 6). A consensus emerged that many unemployed and unemployable adults were in need of basic literacy skills as well as occupational training and that some funds needed to be redirected for basic literacy skills instruction. This consensus was consistent with amendments to the Manpower Training and Development Act, which identified basic literacy skills instruction as a necessary accompaniment to vocational training. As a result, the newly authorized JTPA, particularly Title II-A, puts a greater focus on the educationally disadvantaged and on the basic literacy skills competencies that will enable participants to secure long-term, gainful employment.

Title II-A, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, provides guidelines for youth and adult training programs carried out by states in partnership with the private sector and local government entities. Its purpose is to assist economically disadvantaged adults and youth, as well as non-economically disadvantaged individuals with special needs who face serious barriers to employment, to get job training and move into long-term employment. Individuals with special needs might include the handicapped, offenders, older workers, teenage parents, AFDC recipients, and others (MAXIMUS, Inc., 1991).

The U.S. Secretary of Labor, through the Employment and Training Administration, distributes funds in the form of state block grants based on unemployment and poverty statistics. About 78% of the funds is used to provide services through designated service delivery areas (SDAs), geographical and economic areas determined by each state. Local governments, in conjunction with Private Industry Councils (PICs), which are composed of representatives from the business, labor, and education communities, are responsible for the management of JTPA services within a given SDA. They may administer the program themselves or contract with other entities to provide services. The remaining 22% supports statewide activities, 8% of which is allocated for educational programs generally administered by state educational agencies. This educational allotment supports coordination efforts between education and training programs, literacy training for youth and adults, and dropout prevention and school-to-work transition services (McDonald et al., 1987).

Approximately $1.8 billion was appropriated for the entire JTPA program in fiscal year 1992. It is important to note that there is no separate allocation or accounting for basic literacy skills programming. While there is no required match for the bulk of the appropriation, states and/or local education agencies must provide a 1:1 match for funds under the educational allocation.

Coordination is a hallmark of the JTPA legislation, at least as written. Governors must submit annual plans that demonstrate coordination of the JTPA program with elementary and secondary education, adult education, job training, public assistance, economic development, postsecondary education, and vocational rehabilitation programs. The legislation also provides for the establishment of State Job Training Coordinating Councils whose role is to oversee the plans of all state agencies that provide any type of education and training programs. PICs must include representatives of the education community, and finally, public agencies including education must review the plans of local SDAs.

Performance standards for JTPA are based on the status of clients 90 days after completion of a program. It is anticipated that successful participants will secure and retain nonsubsidized employment. Programs are also expected to produce improvements in client earnings and a decrease in the number of clients receiving public assistance. In addition, it is anticipated that youth participants will find employment, improve basic literacy skills competencies, graduate from high school, and enroll in other training programs.

3. Job Opportunity for Basic Skills (JOBS)

The Job Opportunity for Basic Skills program, authorized under Title IIa of the 1988 Family Support Act, was an attempt to enable AFDC parents to become self-sufficient through education and training and to remove them permanently from the welfare rolls.

The JOBS program, administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides families on public assistance with education, job training, and other services that will enable them to avoid long-term welfare dependency and achieve self-sufficiency (MAXIMUS, Inc., 1991). Services must include adult basic education, high school completion programs, and ESL instruction. Skills training, job readiness programs, job development and placement, child care, and other support services are important components. In addition, programs must include at least two of the following: job search, on-the-job training, community service, and supplementary work programs.

JOBS is a capped entitlement program, and, therefore, funds are allocated up to a limit established for each fiscal year. Through the Administration for Children and Families, the Secretary of Health and Human Services makes allotments to each state based on: (a) allocations under its predecessor, the WIN program, and (b) each state's average monthly proportion of AFDC clients.

Although $1 billion was available for JOBS in fiscal year 1992, the 50%/50% match requirement inhibited many financially strapped states from fully participating.[3] States are expected to increase the level of participation in JOBS from 11% of AFDC clients in 1992 to 20% by 1995.

At the state level, JOBS is administered by welfare agencies. State JOBS plans are reviewed by state governors and Job Training and Coordinating Councils and then submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services every two years. States submit two plans. One is for the administration of the JOBS program, and this plan includes program goals and objectives, cooperating agencies, estimates of individuals to be served, and processes for recruiting, servicing, and tracking clients. The other is a support services plan for such items as child care and transportation services (MAXIMUS, Inc., 1991). JOBS programs must be coordinated with other state employment and education programs, including JTPA, adult education, and vocational education. Child care activities must be coordinated with preschool and early childhood programs and public housing.

Since JOBS is targeted to reduce long-term welfare dependency, all AFDC participants are eligible, but priorities for service include families who have been on welfare for three out of the last five years, individuals under the age of 24 who do not have a high school diploma, and families who are within two years of losing their welfare eligibility (because of their children's ages). As with JTPA, JOBS participants are expected to become self-sufficient, and program performance standards are based on increased earnings and reduced welfare dependence.

4. Other Program Initiatives

It is appropriate to mention several other policy initiatives that were authorized during the 1980s and that have added resources and depth to publicly funded literacy efforts.

A. Immigrant Refugee and Control Act

The 1986 Immigrant Refugee and Control Act, and a 1988 amendment that established State Legalization Impact Assistance Grants, provided a major impetus for ESL adult education programs. Under the act, illegal aliens could be granted amnesty if they participated in a minimum of 40 hours of adult education and demonstrated satisfactory progress in learning minimal English, U.S. history, and citizenship skills. States were allocated up to $1 billion to provide services such as public assistance, public health, education, and outreach activities. Funding for the program

expired in 1992, but states have been allowed to carry money forward through 1994. Although highly prescriptive, the program provided a significant influx of resources to adult ESL programs.

B. EVEN START

The impact of family on a child's educational achievement has been widely acknowledged in recent years. Through Even Start, Congress sought to relate the known research regarding the importance of the educational achievement of parents, particularly mothers, on the likely educational achievement of children. Even Start attempts to integrate adult and early childhood education. Parents and children work together in a learning program that assists parents in becoming advocates for and partners in their children's education. Literacy instruction for parents as well as learning activities focused on active parent involvement in the education of their children is required. Services are also provided to help children succeed in school. In July 1992, when funding reached $70 million, Even Start became a state formula program and allocations to state education agencies are now based on Chapter 1 formulas.

C. STEWART B. MCKINNEY HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

Adult education for the homeless is provided under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. Primary components include outreach and coordinated services with other social service agencies, basic literacy skills and high school preparation programs, curriculum development, and counseling services. Since 1988, funding has ranged from $7.2 million to $9.7 million. It is a competitive program managed by state education agencies.

D. LIBRARY SERVICES AND CONSTRUCTION ACT

Two titles of the Library Services and Construction Act support literacy services. Title I provides for library services, including literacy programs, in areas where services are inadequate. Title VI specifically seeks to provide literacy services through the development of local library programs, staff development and training for librarians and volunteers, and the acquisition of literacy materials. Title VI funding ranged from $4.8 million in fiscal year 1988 to $8.2 million in fiscal year 1992.

E. OTHER

There have been additional pieces of legislation that incorporated literacy into their purposes. Examples include: the VISTA Literacy Corps under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act; the Student Literacy Corps under the Higher Education Act; the

Commercial Drivers Program under the Higher Education Technical Amendments; and the Federal Bureau of Prisons Literacy Program under the Crime Control Act of 1990. There are also bilingual family English literacy programs, migrant education high school equivalency programs, special programs for Native American adults, and adult education programs in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Adult literacy was also included in the National Education Goals promulgated by President Bush and the nation's governors at the Education Summit of 1989 with the following declaration: "Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship."

Although not a legislative mandate, Goal V reflects the continuing public policy interest in this area, and it is anticipated that the new administration will continue to work toward its achievement.

C. State Coordination of Adult Literacy Programs

This review of major literacy initiatives makes it clear that the legislative intent has been to establish a system of coordination, referral, and service delivery to meet a wide array of basic literacy skills needs. However, the differing and sometimes conflicting policies of AEA, JTPA, and JOBS often work to prevent such a system from materializing. Despite this fact, many states have tried in good faith to establish a coordinated system to deliver better, more holistic services.

Telephone surveys were conducted by the author with state directors of adult education throughout the country. The surveys examined state-level efforts to coordinate AEA, JTPA, and JOBS programs. Directors of adult education in Massachusetts, New York, and Kentucky, in particular, were extensively interviewed to determine the status of collaboration and coordinated service delivery in their states. These three states were selected because of the variety of their efforts to coordinate service delivery. In Massachusetts, 13 different literacy agencies came together under the rubric of the Interagency Literacy Group. In New York, positive staff relationships with the Department of Health and Human Services fostered coordination. In Kentucky, coordination was mandated by a restructuring of the state bureaucracy.

The directors were asked to describe the purpose of state coordination and the agencies and programs involved, specific collaborative activities, and challenges to coordination.

1. Massachusetts

Robert Bickerton, Director of Adult Education, described the Massachusetts vision of adult education programming as a seamless system that would provide a continuum of services for clients, from family services and basic literacy skills instruction through training, higher education, and employment. Funds in Massachusetts are distributed on a competitive basis, focusing first and foremost on the quality of program services. Community organizations now constitute about 50% of the state's service providers.

A. AGENCIES/PROGRAMS INVOLVED

Establishing this vision and a consistent policy framework and then translating them into a coordinated, operational reality was the mission of the Massachusetts Interagency Literacy Group (ILG). This group included the Departments of Education, Welfare, and Employment and Training (including JTPA and Employment Services); Medical Security; Communities and Development (including public housing); the Office of Refugees and Immigration; the Board of Regents (higher education and libraries); the Industrial Services Program (dislocated workers); and SDA Associations.

Prior to the budgetary crisis in 1988, these state agencies were investing in literacy services in a manner that created a *patchwork quilt* of overlapping responsibilities. The formation of the ILG was intended to shift from that model of piecemeal construction to a seamless blanket service delivery system.

B. SPECIFIC COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

The collaborative work of the agencies has made significant inroads in the development of a coordinated service delivery system for adult literacy clients, including:

- joint development and adoption of uniform definitions, performance standards and criteria, and reporting protocols for adult basic education (ABE) programs;
- a unified purchase of service protocol (RFP), local programs submit one proposal that can attract funding from as few as one to as many as five or six different agency sources; and
- policies, practices, and funding that support the state's ABE staff and program development system—System for Adult Basic Education Support—by all agencies involved in the provision of basic literacy skills programs.

After the budget crisis in 1988, funds became tight, and some of the efforts to coordinate services went by the wayside. However, there are still significant programmatic areas of cooperation. The unified RFP agreement supports adult learning centers under the auspices of the Department of Education, the Department of Corrections, and the state's 15 SDAs. Joint ABE/occupational training programs and mentoring projects for AFDC recipients are being implemented on a pilot basis with the Department of Public

Welfare, although the bulk of JOBS-related services continue to be implemented separately. Coordination continues with the State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant (SLIAG) through the Office of Refugees and Immigrants. A family literacy initiative is emerging through coordinated efforts with the Board of Library Commissioners using funds from the Library Services and Construction Act, the Adult Education Act, and Even Start.

C. CHALLENGES TO COORDINATION

The director of adult education elaborated on some of the continuing objectives and dilemmas of this process:

- Programs should coordinate funding, not just share resources. Basic literacy skills providers must still prepare different accountability reports for each of the funding sources for their programs. Although the use of a single, coordinated RFP is increasingly acceptable, local programs must still account for different types of clients (e.g., ABE, JOBS, and JTPA) separately. Local administrators must track services to these clients separately, maintain separate budgets for each of the various funding sources, and provide separate project reports to each of the funding agencies.
- Obstacles to fully integrating clients in a comprehensive mix of adult education classes remain. For example, because of the required 20 hours of services per week, JOBS clients are often placed in programs separate from other ABE clients.
- Coordination with ABE services purchased under the JTPA system continues to be very limited.
- A uniform client intake and reporting process has not yet been established; thus, local programs have to keep separate records and use different protocols for students who may be in the same class.
- The Interagency Literacy Group should be resurrected under the Mass. Jobs Council (the state's equivalent of the Human Resources Investment Council) so that all appropriate stakeholders are once again at the table to complete the process begun four years ago.

Massachusetts appears to have gone halfway in the coordination process. Potential grantees are asked to think holistically about the literacy needs of all clients in their community, and they are offered a unified RFP protocol to support the holistic notion for an expanding number of funding sources. However, the system then reverts to the duplicative tracking and reporting mandated by federal policies, which reinforce the differences in the programs rather than enhancing the state's commitment to qualitative, effective, and seamless services.

2. New York

Garrett Murphy, Director of the Division of Continuing Education, Planning, and Development, indicates that the vision of the collaborating agencies is to meet the demands of a rapidly changing economy by establishing a system that provides the broad array of necessary services: basic education, vocational training, job training, and the attendant required counseling activities.

A. Agencies/Programs Involved

The New York State Education Department (SED) has had a long history of cooperation with the Departments of Social Services and Labor. These three agencies came together to focus attention on the training and educational needs of the state's educationally and economically disadvantaged adults.

B. Specific Collaborative Activities

New York State has offered two major initiatives that are truly collaborative in nature and that support the legislative mandates of AEA, JOBS, and JTPA. Recent agreements between the Department of Social Services and the SED resulted in the establishment of two programs, which are administered by the SED: (a) Adult Centers for Comprehensive Education and Support Services (ACCESS Centers) and (b) Counseling, Assessment, and Support Services for Education and Training (CASSET sites). The underlying philosophy of both programs is to provide basic literacy and life skills as well as occupational education in order to enable public assistance recipients to become self-sufficient and independent (Alamprese, Brighman, & Sivilli, 1992).

The ACCESS model provides comprehensive services in geographical areas likely to contain high numbers of the target population. ACCESS Centers are *one stop shopping centers* for educationally and economically disadvantaged clients and deliver a compendium of services at a single site under a single

administrative structure. Services to clients include basic literacy skills instruction, GED and ESL programs, workplace literacy, occupational education, instruction in coping/life skills, career counseling, and job development and placement programs; case management services and day care are also available. Each center has a local advisory committee representing all of the collaborating agencies.

CASSET sites serve as brokering agencies to ensure that clients receive the various types of services that they need to become independent and self-sustaining. They differ from ACCESS Centers in that all services are not necessarily provided under one roof. However, a consistent and supportive referral system has been established within each CASSET community. CASSET sites typically provide case management services, instructional assessment and programming, and parenting education. Child care and transportation are generally available. Job development and occupational training, however, are often provided at a different location.

A critical element in the coordination of ACCESS and CASSET services relates to the integration of funding. Through inter- and intra-agency agreements, the Division of Continuing Education manages a variety of funds—AEA funds, Perkins vocational funds for single parents, the JTPA 8% education set aside, JOBS funds, state welfare education funds, state adult literacy funds, and state social service and aging funds—that were combined to support the CASSET and ACCESS programs. The exact configuration of each of these funding sources at the local level is dependent on the nature of the population served and the specific services that are offered (Alamprese et al., 1992, p. 123).

C. CHALLENGES TO COORDINATION

As noted, New York's SED Office of Continuing Education has had a long and successful history of coordinating services to meet various client needs. This has facilitated the success of the ACCESS and CASSET programs. However, as in Massachusetts, the various federal requirements—for tracking clients, reporting outcomes, and fiscal accountability—continue to be a challenge. The process of clarifying which clients at which centers receive what services paid for by what funds continues to be a source of difficulty. Various attempts have been made to establish a coordinated reporting mechanism in order to determine client services and expenditures, but none has yet been deemed adequate to cover the demands of all the program mandates. Plans are underway to combine education and social service dollars to design and implement a

system of individual client data maintenance and reports. The Job Training Partnership Council and the State Department of Labor have been invited to participate.

3. KENTUCKY

Teresa Suter, head of the Office of Adult Education Services in the Department for Adult and Technical Education, reported that at the time of the legislatively mandated restructuring of Kentucky's K–12 education system in 1990, the Cabinet of Development was established to coordinate all adult human resource development activities.

A. AGENCIES/PROGRAMS INVOLVED

The cabinet provided a visible, policy-level presence for human resource development activities in the governor's cabinet and a comprehensive system of adult training for the state. The newly formed cabinet incorporated the Department for Adult and Technical Education, the State Board for Adult and Technical Education, the Department for Vocational Rehabilitation, the Kentucky Department for the Blind, the Governor's Council on Vocational Education, the Kentucky Occupational Coordinating Information Committee, the Kentucky Job Training Coordinating Council, the State Board for Proprietary Education, and the Kentucky Literacy Commission.

B. SPECIFIC COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

The mission of the Office of Adult Education Services of the Department for Adult and Technical Education is to improve the basic literacy skills of Kentucky adults. It manages approximately $400,000 in JTPA funds for the adult education program, which serves students who function above a fifth-grade reading level. The Kentucky Literacy Commission provides volunteer literacy services to adults who cannot read. The Cabinet of Development also receives contractual funds in the amount of $2.6 million from the JOBS program, which is managed by the Department of Social Insurance. The JOBS contract provides support for volunteer literacy programs and ABE and GED programs. Local programs that offer both volunteer literacy services and ABE programs are required to submit two proposals to the Cabinet via the Office of Adult Education Services and the Literacy Commission. However, local programs that serve JOBS and JTPA clients submit only one proposal to the Adult Education Office.

Kentucky has developed a coordinated management information system (MIS) that identifies clients for all three

programs by social security numbers.[4] JTPA funds help to support this system.

C. CHALLENGES TO COORDINATION

The continued funding by the Department for Social Insurance of both adult education and the Literacy Commission reinforces a division rather than a continuum of services for literacy clients. Grade level discrimination, upon which the decision to fund volunteers or teachers is based, is arbitrary rather than a real reflection of student skills. However, it appears that the cabinet has made significant strides toward integrating the services necessary to establish a holistic system of adult training activities. It is a new structure and, as with any new bureaucratic function, needs to mature to fulfill its potential.

D. What Coordination Means at the Local Level

To determine if policy mandates and other state-level efforts in service coordination make a difference in terms of direct services to clients, local administrators in Massachusetts, New York, and Kentucky were interviewed. They were asked: (a) Have the state efforts to coordinate programs enabled you to provide better services to your clients? and (b) What are the issues surrounding coordination that you feel need to be addressed?

1. Massachusetts

The Community Learning Center (CLC) in Cambridge provides comprehensive services to more than 1,000 clients annually. More than 13 different funding sources support its programs. It is open from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. daily, except for Fridays when it closes at 5:00 p.m. Intensive basic literacy skills classes and JOBS and JTPA programs are provided, with a significant focus on counseling. Most services are offered on site, although some programs are offered in community schools, public libraries, homeless shelters, and workplaces.

To Mina Reddy, Coordinator of the CLC, the most positive aspect of the policy initiatives toward more coordinated service delivery is the provision of more funds to support basic literacy skills services. As in many areas of the country, however, Massachusetts still has significant waiting lists for many of its programs, so "the additional funds are still not enough, particularly in the severe economic times in which we find ourselves."

Reddy applauded the unified RFP but indicated that she still must submit separate proposals to the local SDA for JTPA and JOBS programs. In addition, under a new system in Massachusetts that enables SDAs to contract with centers such as the CLC for individual client services, she also manages individual service contracts. She indicated that although tracking services to individual clients is a significant administrative burden, the CLC participates so that more clients can receive the services they need. However, she feels that managing multiple funding sources has become an administrative headache and an abuse of her time. She specifically noted the inconsistencies in the awarding of funds,

in payment schedules, and in reimbursement procedures that cause uncertainty and disruption in service provision.

She also expressed concern regarding JTPA's performance-based contracting and reimbursement system. Literacy programs, already in precarious health due to limited funding, often have to wait months to be reimbursed for services. In addition, if performance requirements are not met, programs may not be reimbursed for services already provided. Sometimes failure to meet performance requirements is not because of poor services, but rather because of conditions totally outside the purview of the program (e.g., economic, employment, and social trends). She strongly believes that expectations for the outcomes of services should be more realistic.

State economic conditions, despite a commitment to coordinated services, can severely hamper the utilization of service programs. During 1992, Massachusetts stopped child care payments for AFDC families, significantly influencing the ability of welfare recipients to participate in adult education programs.[5]

2. New York

The Columbia-Greene Community College adult education program in Hudson is 90% supported by JTPA funds but also serves as an ACCESS site, providing assessment services for the state JOBS program as well as occupational education, ABE, child care, and counseling services. State attendance funds in New York are used to meet the federal JOBS match, but Hudson County, where the college is located, was unable to generate enough funds to qualify for JOBS dollars. Thus, the program does not serve JOBS clients.

Robert Bodratti, Director of the Office of Employment and Training at Columbia-Greene, expressed concern regarding funding accountability for programs supported by multiple sources. He feels that the level of reporting detail required by programs that mix funding is hardly worth the effort because so much time must be spent accounting for discretionary categories rather than examining the entire program and the services that are provided. He hopes for more flexibility in this area in the future.

3. Kentucky

The Ashland Adult Education Program serves an average of 500 clients per year in rural Kentucky through its Adult Learning Center and several outreach sites at housing projects, workplace literacy programs, rural elementary schools, libraries, community centers,

and correctional facilities. About half of its clients are working toward a high school diploma, while the other half have diplomas but need refresher programs in basic mathematics or English to enable them to compete for better jobs or participate in postsecondary education.

Joan Flannery is Coordinator of the Ashland program. She indicated that the volunteer literacy program and the ABE program meet side by side at the Adult Learning Center and that there is good coordination between them. JOBS students were incorporated into the ABE program in 1990, but, for the 1992-93 program year, they were to be in separate classes. While traditional ABE students are voluntary learners, JOBS clients are mandated to attend and many need additional support to remain with the program. One of her greatest challenges as coordinator is dealing with the issue of self-motivated versus mandated clientele. The JOBS program and the Family Resource Center are now located at a housing project, eliminating the need for transportation. The Center coordinates special events and speakers with all of the programs that it offers.

The Interagency Council in Ashland facilitates coordination of adult education service delivery, program guidelines, and referral activities with vocational education programs and programs at the community college. Adult educators serve as members of the council, which, in Flannery's view, enhances the prestige and visibility of adult education services.

While she appreciated the state's unified RFP for adult education programs that included JOBS and JTPA clients, Flannery indicated that even though only one application is necessary, she must still define the allocation of funds for different clients. She also indicated that significant amounts of her administrative time are spent responding to the varied reporting and invoicing requirements for each of the different programs, all of which require breakdowns and separate invoicing for salaries, benefits, and other direct services by funding source. The need to maintain separate budgets for individual staff in the same programs is, in Flannery's words, an "administrative nightmare."

Like the other local program directors, Flannery did not indicate that services to clients had become any better or any more focused as a result of state efforts at coordination. In fact, the Interagency Council was in place prior to the state's efforts at coordination. Because Ashland is a rural area, local agencies began to come together to plan services early on in the process.

By mandating coordination, did Congress believe clients would be better served? Is this presumption borne out in reality? These questions remain despite current attempts to answer them.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

Public policy efforts that foster coordination in order to provide better services to clients in need of basic literacy skills have been well intentioned but not as well implemented. AEA, JOBS, and JTPA programs have differences in seven areas: (a) purpose/foci, (b) funding, (c) client eligibility, (d) services provided, (e) administrative structures, (f) delivery systems, and (g) data collection. These seven areas of difference are examined in relation to the following recommendations that are offered for their potential to contribute to the development of a manageable, holistic, and effective continuum of literacy services.

1. PURPOSE/FOCI

All three of the major pieces of legislation underscore the need for basic literacy skills instruction, yet only the AEA provides a definition of literacy. The JOBS legislation supports adult basic education, adult secondary education, and English language programming—but to what purpose? JTPA has no specific literacy-related definition. This leads to confusion as to what would be considered an effective package of basic literacy skills for the various programs. This study offers two recommendations:

- Incorporate the AEA definition of literacy into all three pieces of legislation. This would be a starting point for understanding what the literacy efforts of each program should be. It would also help to foster joint programming by ensuring that all literacy programs focus on the same set of outcomes for literacy instruction.
- Encourage the development of an assessment system that would be used by all programs to determine the basic literacy skills needs of clients. The assessment system should be flexible enough to focus on the many types and needs of clients involved in basic literacy skills programs and incorporate academic and competency-based as well as portfolio evaluation processes.

While all three programs incorporate employability into their objectives, only JTPA and JOBS include job development and placement as explicit outcomes. The AEA's purpose is to prepare individuals in basic and functional competencies, which might also include entering the, but it does not specify vocational training,

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

job development, or job placement. Indeed, estimates indicate that 50% of participants in adult education programs are already employed (National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium, 1992).

In their recent report, Chisman and Woodworth (1992) indicated that the goal of self-sufficiency for JOBS participants as described in the Family Support Act is not clear.

> *...the Family Support Act does not provide a realistic operational definition of the goals of the JOBS program. The federal regulations that govern the program repeatedly refer to its goal as the "self-sufficiency" of welfare recipients. But the regulations do not state what self-sufficiency is, or how to measure progress toward it. (p. 71)*

Two recommendations for these problems are offered:

- clarify expected outcomes from literacy services as a support to the more explicit employment purposes of the JOBS and JTPA programs; and
- clarify the meaning of self-sufficiency for the entire JOBS program, specifically as it relates to literacy skills.

2. FUNDING

Although there are disparities in the funding levels of the three programs, their combined total in fiscal year 1992 was approximately $3 billion. However, only the AEA can provide clear evidence and accountability of funds used for basic literacy skills development because all of its programs are directed at literacy development. According to the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (1992), states spent a total of $707 million on adult education basic grant programming in 1990, and the federal share was $141 million (p. 31).

Specific expenditures for basic literacy skills programs are not available for JOBS and JTPA. JOBS services include educational activities, job skill training, job readiness, job development, job placement, and on-the-job training. In addition, a case management system assists clients in working through the labyrinth of programs provided through JOBS. Chisman and Woodworth (1992) indicate that basic literacy skills instruction plays a major role in state JOBS programs, but funding is not sufficient to provide the significant educational services required to promote self-sufficiency among clients. When state officials were asked to

explain how the funds were spent, it was "clear that by far the greatest portion of JOBS funds were spent on case management. States reported that 40–50% of JOBS funds were spent for this purpose" (p. 86). Chisman and Woodworth estimate that about 35% of the funds were spent on adult education, job search, and transportation, while the remaining 15% supported job training, vocational education, and other administrative services.

Because of the enormity of basic literacy skills needs among welfare clients and the lack of adequate funding available, JOBS clients have been sent to traditional adult education programs. A provision in the JOBS legislation seems to support the notion that funding for this whole new group of clients must come from the AEA program. The law specifically states that JOBS-funded services must not supplant services already existing in a state. This has often been interpreted to mean that JOBS programs can not provide funds to support basic literacy skills programming. However, placement of JOBS clients in traditional ABE programs puts a significant burden on already stretched adult education programs whose mission is to serve the general public, not just welfare clients.

In terms of JTPA, other than the 8% educational set aside that is shared in most states by adult and vocational education, there is no mandatory allocation for basic literacy skills programs and thus no real accountability as to the amount being used for them. The following four recommendations are supported by Chisman and Woodworth (1992) in their study of the JOBS program:

- The federal government should permit states to utilize a portion of nonmatched federal dollars to support basic literacy skills services because the need for basic literacy skills is so evident among JOBS participants and because state support is limited by fiscal constraints.
- There should be a separate and accurate accounting for the funds used for basic literacy skills programs.
- The requirement that JOBS programs can not supplant existing services should be redefined to focus on only those services that were specifically designed for and delivered to AFDC recipients. The present interpretation "is overly broad and leads to undue burdens on adult education programs intended to serve the general public." (p. 94)

- The participation level of AFDC recipients should be restored to the first-year level of 7%. State economic conditions are still precarious and available state financing is more limited just at the time when more clients are potentially eligible for service.

In addition to the above recommendations, general policies should be established to (a) ensure consistent funding cycles for the three programs, (b) streamline and provide for uniform accounting procedures among the programs to ease the administrative burden on local providers, and (c) examine the possibility of fund accounting by percentages of various types of services (e.g., teaching, counseling, support services, job search), rather than the strict specificity that is required now. If a local program submits a plan to provide clients with particular services, it should be held accountable for remaining within the total budget and for providing those services. This contrasts with the present line item reporting requirements. It would appear that too much time is spent on ***administrivia*** rather than on ensuring that appropriate services are available.

Finally, and perhaps foremost, there is a need to examine whether the federal presumption concerning the importance of basic literacy skills instruction in adult education, JOBS, and JTPA is supported by the available funding.

As noted earlier, only the AEA specifically utilizes its funding for basic literacy skills services. JOBS and JTPA have the need but have not necessarily provided the additional funding to meet that need. Is the federal government truly committed to a literate society? Will it provide the funds to ensure that the process has some possibility of success or, given the financial constraints, should some priorities be set to ensure that at least some clients are being served adequately?

3. Client Eligibility

AEA programs are open to all individuals 16 years of age and over who do not have a high school diploma and are not required to be in school. Employment, economic disadvantage, and/or welfare dependency are *not* requirements for participation. JOBS clients must be AFDC recipients. JTPA serves economically disadvantaged individuals as determined by income levels or participation in welfare programs, and there is a small set aside for individuals who have been temporarily displaced due to job changes or the elimination of their employment. The following two recommendations are suggested:

- Policymakers should establish consistent elements in the definitions of clients to be served in all basic literacy skills programs. Basic literacy skills programs should be available, with adequate funding, for all clients who need them.
- The factors that discriminate among the clients noted in each piece of legislation should be used to focus more clearly on expected outcomes such as jobs or self-sufficiency.

4. Services Provided

JOBS clients must participate in programs at least 20 hours per week, and in order for a program to be reimbursed, they must participate at that rate 75% of the time. The 20 hours must include basic literacy skills instruction as well as job search, job development, and training. In addition, case managers provide individualized services to JOBS clients. Child care services and transportation are also provided, although they are supported with other Family Support funds.

In adult education programs, individuals are generally part of an instructional program (individualized, small group, or class) in basic literacy skills or high school completion. Participants may be native speakers or adults with limited English proficiency. Counseling, transportation services, and child care are sometimes available, but these services generally reflect the availability of funding. Typically, programs are open entry/open exit and classes are offered two to three times per week, two to three hours per class. There is no mandatory participation requirement.

JTPA clients are provided with a wide array of services, including on-the-job training that provides for employer subsidies of up to 50% of a participant's wage for a contracted period of time. (Employers must make a good faith commitment to retain the participant once the contracted period is over.) JTPA also provides classroom instruction, apprenticeship programs, and work/training experience in vocational skills. Some customized training is provided as well as some basic literacy skills programming. There is no mandated participation rate. Three recommendations address the above problems:

- All clients should have the opportunity to participate in basic literacy skills programs for as long as necessary to meet their educational needs.
- Funding should be available to enable all basic literacy skills programs to offer the support systems

inherent in JOBS and JTPA programs. Clients in adult education programs are typically educationally and economically disadvantaged, although they may not be unemployed or AFDC recipients. They may have as much need for counseling, case management, child care, and transportation services as do JOBS and JTPA clients. Although the AEA says these services should be provided, adult education programs have never had enough resources to fulfill those needs and provide instruction for those who come to the programs.

- States should be encouraged to ensure that all funded programs have an adequate referral system that enables clients to receive the services that they require. Flexibility must be provided to allow the referral system to be established in the most appropriate way for each state.

5. Administrative Structures

The three programs discussed above are administered by three different agencies: JTPA is managed by the Department of Labor, JOBS by the Department of Health and Human Services, and the AEA by the Department of Education. This structure is paralleled at the state level, although the agencies may have different names and configurations. Kahn (1986) pointed out the difficulty of working with multiple federal agencies, each with its own constituencies, agendas, administrative structures, and rules and regulations. The same barriers to effective coordination exist at the state level.

It is recommended that the agencies responsible for these services become truly client centered, not funding and accountability focused as currently seems to be the case. Administrators at the federal and state levels must stop protecting their turf and begin to work together to establish policies that will ensure a continuum of holistic services for the clients whose interests they represent.

Alamprese, Brighman, and Sivilli (1992) noted that coordination is enhanced by "Interpersonal communication strategies—the enhancement of existing working relationships between staff across state and local agencies and the creation of communication mechanisms for ongoing clarification of a group's goals and needs" (p. *xi*). This process should take place at the federal level as well. The Interagency Planning Group, initially

proposed in the National Literacy Act, is made up of the Assistant Secretaries from the Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services. This is an important step in beginning the collaborative process of ongoing planning and communication.

6. Delivery Systems

In adult education programs, states distribute funds to eligible entities that may include local education agencies, community colleges or other postsecondary institutions, volunteer organizations, community-based organizations, public or private nonprofit agencies, correctional institutions, and other institutions that serve adults in need of basic literacy skills remediation. Under the 1991 National Literacy Act, states are required to provide "direct and equitable access" to funds for all nonprofit literacy programs, which generally provide small group instruction, tutoring activities, or services in full-time learning centers.

JOBS programs may be carried out directly by state welfare agencies or indirectly under contract with SDAs, state and local educational agencies, and other public and private agencies. With JTPA, Private Industry Councils (PICs) have been established in each SDA to establish policies and oversee program development in that area. PICs may manage programs themselves or delegate that responsibility to another nonprofit community or government agency. Different agencies may be selected to provide different services, and local educational agencies are given a preference in the delivery of educational services.

This study, while supporting the need to encourage different providers of literacy services, recommends that implementation of the new direct and equitable access provision should be examined to ensure that it does not simply place undue requirements on states for a more disparate distribution of already limited funds.

7. Data Collection

Data collection is an area in which federal resources have varied significantly. JTPA began with a commitment to management information systems, and funds were provided to establish such systems. Therefore, substantial information on clients, jobs, wages, and participation in other federal programs has been collected. However, as noted earlier, there is no accounting of funds expended for basic literacy skills services. Although JOBS requires significant record keeping on client participation through the case management system, many teachers in adult education programs may be unaware that some of their students are JOBS clients (Chisman & Woodworth, 1992).

Additionally, 93% of adult education teachers are part-time;[6] they are paid for teaching, not record keeping. The result may be poor or faulty record keeping for the JOBS program (p. 59).

Many adult education programs are only now beginning to develop data management systems. However, administrative funds for adult education have long been capped at 5%. In a program that has such great client needs and such limited resources as compared with JOBS and JTPA, decisions regarding adult education programs have often been made that focus on the need for additional instruction rather than on administrative and/or support services such as the development of an MIS. Two recommendations address these problems:

- Funds should be made available for the establishment of a comprehensive MIS system for adult education and JOBS, as well as JTPA.
- States need to continue to develop and enhance cooperative data collection efforts. This process will be made much simpler if, as recommended, consistency in definitions, administration, and reporting is achieved.

F. SUMMARY

From the early history of the United States, when the government was interested only in whether a male head of household could write his name, a point has been reached where the development of literacy skills is seen as the underpinning for practically every aspect of productive life. Literacy levels are linked to issues of economic development, productivity, a world class work force, and economic self-sufficiency.

The negative aspect of this discovery of the importance of literacy and adult education is that literacy could become the scapegoat for all of society's ills. It is incorrect to assume that individuals who achieve what might be considered an acceptable level of literacy—although there is no agreement on what that might be—will automatically be able to secure jobs, move off welfare, and become contributing members of society. A holistic continuum of services for literacy clients served through adult education, JOBS, and JTPA is far from being a reality today. Nonetheless, some exciting efforts to provide such a system are taking place at state and local levels. A renewed commitment to client-centered services on the part of policymakers and program administrators is crucial. Leaders of vision and good will can make the types of changes recommended here and ensure that coordinated literacy service delivery will become a reality.

ENDNOTES

1 From interview with James Parker, U.S. Department of Education on February 5, 1993.

2 In 1990, federal contributions were $140.6 million, while state and local support totaled upwards of $566.6 million (National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium, 1992).

3 Effective September 1992, all programs became ACCESS sites in recognition of the fact that many local programs were providing services under one roof as a matter of convenience and practicality.

4 A study conducted for the National Center on Adult Literacy (Kutner & Webb, 1993) indicates that 18 states are involved in some type of collaborative MIS effort: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia. Only Kentucky and Alabama are involved in joint data collection efforts. Wisconsin is beginning to collaborate on data collection for ABE, JOBS, and Perkins clients. Virginia and Utah attempted to develop collaborative MIS systems but were unable to establish formats to meet the differing requirements of state agencies. The remainder of the states share data, generally through hard copy reports sent to the various agencies. Nine states share data with the JOBS and JTPA programs; two share data with only the JOBS program and two only with the JTPA program.

5 In their recent evaluation of the JOBS program, Chisman and Woodworth (1992) noted that only about half of the federal funds available to states on a matching was spent in fiscal year 1991. "Because of their fiscal problems, many states were not able to match all the federal dollars available to them, and....It is estimated that in fiscal year 1991, combining non-federal and federal funds, about $1 billion was actually spent on the JOBS program." (p. 85).

6 Interview with Ronald Pugsley, Acting Director, Division of Adult Education and Literacy, U.S. Department of Education, in September 1992.

REFERENCES

Alamprese, J., Brighman, N., & Sivilli, J. (1992). *Patterns of promise: State and local strategies for improving coordination in adult education programs.* (Draft report). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Policy and Planning.

Chisman, F. P., & Woodworth, R. S. (1992). *The promise of JOBS.* Washington, DC: The Southport Institute for Policy Analysis.

Costa, M. (1988). *Adult literacy/illiteracy in the United States.* Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Downs, S. (1991). *Streamlining and integrating human resource development services for adults.* Washington, DC: National Governors' Association.

Eyre, G. (1992). 25 years—A dream fulfilled. In *The adult education program annual report, program year 1990.* Washington, DC: National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium.

Fallis, M. (1991). *The new director's primer to the Job Training Partnership Act.* Washington, DC: National Association of Counties.

Gartland, J. (1991). *Coordinating federal assistance programs for the economically disadvantaged: Recommendations and background materials.* (Special Report 31). Washington, DC: National Commission for Employment Policy.

Grubb, W. N., Brown, C., Kaufman, P., & Lederer, J. (1991). Order amidst complexity: The status of coordination between vocational education, Job Training Partnership Act, and welfare to work programs. In L. W. Tindall (Ed.), *Making the connection: Coordinating education and training for a skilled* (pp. 13-15). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, Vocational Studies Center.

Kahn, M. E. (1986). *Literacy management information project report.* Washington, DC: Washington Consulting Group, Inc.

Kutner, M., & Webb, L. (1993). *Management information systems in adult education: Perspectives from the states and from local programs.* Philadelphia: National Center on Adult Literacy.

MAXIMUS, Inc., National Alliance of Business, and Pelavin Associates, Inc. (1991). *Overview of selected education, training and employment programs.* (A report prepared for the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Services). Washington, DC: Authors.

McDonald, G., et al. (1987). *The Job Training Partnership Act.* Washington, DC: National Commission for Employment Policy.

National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium. (1992). *The adult education program annual report, program year 1990.* Washington, DC: Author.

National Governors' Association. (1991). *Streamlining the business of government: Toward a state human investment system.* (Labor Notes Number 67). Washington, DC: Author.

U.S. Department of Education. (1991). *History of the Adult Education Act: An overview.* Washington, DC: Author.

U.S. Department of Education. (1992). *The AEA as amended by the National Literacy Act.* Washington, DC: Author.